NATIONAL SYMBOLS OF THE DPRK

DPR Korea
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1. NAME OF THE COUNTRY

In general, the official name of a state reflects the type of the state.

The aspirations and desires of the people of the relevant country, its historical traditions and socio-political character can be known through the official name of the country.

Joson was the name of the first ancient state of Korea that was founded by Tangun in the early 30th century BC. The state is called Ancient Joson to distinguish it from the state that existed in the Middle Ages.

Based on the fact that Tangun was proved to be a real figure in history, the academic circles newly clarified that the name *Joson* indicates a land of the rising sun in the East.

The slave-owning state was followed by the first feudal state, Koguryo, in the early 3rd century BC. Koguryo (277 BC-AD 668) existed together with Paekje and Silla.

As a feudal state, founded ahead of the two latter kingdoms, Koguryo achieved rapid progress in the political, economic, cultural and other fields, earning fame as a powerful state in the East.

The name *Koguryo* was inherited by the first unified state in Korea, Koryo, and it became known more widely across the world.

Koryo existed from the early 10th century to the late 14th century.

Name of the Country

With its economy and culture developing, Koryo was known even to the countries in Europe as well as in the East.

Koryo dynasty that existed for nearly 500 years was overthrown in 1392, and a new dynasty was set up.

With the establishment of the new dynasty, great social changes took place, but it failed to raise the plan of renaming the country immediately, and used *Koryo* as its official name.

In November 1392, after it laid its foundations to some extent, it raised the plan of renaming the country Joson, and in February the following year officially declared that its name is Joson.

In 1897 the government of the feudal Joson dynasty renamed the country *Taehan Jeguk* (Empire of Taehan) and declared it at home and abroad.

The reason why the country was compelled to change its name after more than 500 years of its existence and at a time when the dynasty was not replaced by another was because its feudal system was collapsing rapidly in the late 19th century and the feudal ruling system was extremely out of order on the one hand, and on the other the sovereignty of the country was being mercilessly trampled amid a fierce strife among imperialist powers for winning over Korea.

The renaming of the country was an outcome of the worship of big countries, entertained by the feudal rulers who tried to imitate their neighbour, far from being historical necessity.

The feudal rulers expected a great deal from the newly-instituted name of their country, but it was nothing but a mere change of nomenclature. They were unable to check the decline of their country, and the country was finally reduced to a colony of Japanese imperialism. The country was deprived of its name.

In early August 1948, after the liberation of the country, the Presidium of the Central Committee of the Workers' Party of North Korea discussed the problem of adopting the name of the Republic to be founded soon. The meeting decided to name the country *Joson Minjujuui Inmin Konghwaguk* (Democratic People's Republic of Korea).

With the founding of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea on September 9, 1949, the Korean people could have a dignified and proud name of their country.

The official name of the country has a profound meaning.

As for the word *Joson* (Korea), in the history of Korea there existed several states named Joson, including Joson (Ancient Joson) and feudal Joson dynasty, which maintained blood-sealed and political inheritance.

However, the word merely contained a natural meaning. *Joson* contains the meaning of a new Korea, in which the people have become the masters of the country and resolve all problems of their country by their own efforts.

Minjujuui (democracy) reflects the aspirations of the Korean people after freedom and happiness, the reality of the country which is yet to be reunified, and the immediate tasks and basic goals of the Korean revolution.

Inmin (people) contains the meaning that the people are the masters of the country and society and everything serves them.

The words *Minjujuui Inmin Konghwaguk* incorporate the type of the state.

This is a form of state building that concentrates the supreme power of the state on an organ of parliamentary system that represents the will of the broad sections of the masses including workers and farmers, and makes all state power administered through the mode of democracy. It carries the intention of raising the broad sections of the masses as the genuine masters of the state and of building the state into a democratic one that serves them.

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea provides the people of different social strata with not only political freedom and rights but also a happy material and cultural life.

2. NATIONAL EMBLEM

National emblem of the DPRK

National emblem is believed to have its origin in a coat of arms of a family, organization, association, company, shop, city or university.

National emblem symbolizes the sovereignty and dignity of a state. Therefore, its design and colour have the meaning of hallmark of the state, reflecting its political will.

The DPRK's national emblem bears the design of a grand hydroelectric power station under Mt Paektu, the sacred mountain of the revolution, and the beaming light of a five-pointed red star, with ears of rice forming an oval frame, bound with a red ribbon bearing the inscription "The Democratic People's Republic of Korea."

Mt Paektu portrayed in the national emblem shows that the DPRK inherited the anti-Japanese revolutionary traditions.

The beaming light of the five-pointed red star symbolizes the bright future of the DPRK which is advancing dynamically.

The red ribbon stands for the eternity of the invincible unity and cohesion of the Korean people.

The hydroelectric power station and ears of rice portray the prospects of a prosperous DPRK with modern industry based on powerful heavy industry and with modern agriculture.

The national emblem depicts the invincible might and prospering future of the DPRK through its composition and colour.

As for eternity, people, from time immemorial, used to refer to the planets that move along the constant tracks in the limitless space and their movement. The oval form that indicates these tracks has been representative of eternity.

The national emblem of the DPRK is oval-shaped.

The major colours are red, blue, white, yellow, brown and green, and others are those combined with the major colours.

3. NATIONAL FLAG

There are flags that represent over 200 countries and regions on this planet.

The national flag represents the sovereignty of the state in diplomatic events; at home, it is hoisted on national holidays and in major events. It flies all the time on the buildings symbolic of the country.

It is a convention to hoist the flag, together with playing the anthem of the country of the winner, during the awarding ceremony at international games.

National flags symbolize countries by means of colours and designs, so they can be classified according to colour, composition and the characters of symbolic drawings.

The main colours are red, blue, green, yellow, white and black.

The red colour is symbolic of happiness and triumph, the green colour agriculture, forestry and plants as well as hope and faith, the blue colour sea, river, lake, port and sky, and the yellow colour sunlight and wealth.

Some national flags reflect the national and geographical features through different designs and colours; the national flowers, national trees, national birds or other designs in

National flag of the DPRK

them represent the national will along with the identity or geographical features of the nations concerned.

The national flag of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea consists of a central, broad red panel, bordered both above and below by a narrow white stripe and a broad blue stripe. The central red panel bears a five-pointed red star within a white circle near the hoist.

The flag is symbolic of the independent and dignified DPRK.

The red colour of the national flag of the DPRK symbolizes the blood of the forerunners who sacrificed themselves for the freedom and independence of the country and the invincible revolutionary force of the Korean

people who are united single-heartedly.

The white stripes imply the homogeneity and brilliant culture of the Korean nation. From olden times the Korean people were very fond of the white colour that symbolizes honesty, uprightness, purity and smartness, so the colour had been closely linked to their customs and daily life.

The blue stripes stand for the vigour of the Korean people who are waging a struggle to achieve the victory of the socialist cause and their aspiration after world peace and progress.

The five-pointed red star represents the revolutionary traditions inherited by the DPRK, the revolutionary spirit of the Korean people and the bright future of the country which will be prosperous, shining like a star.

The national flag of the DPRK depicts the high national dignity and stamina of the independent people through its composition.

The flag is of rectangular type, whose ratio of the breadth to the length is 1 to 2. It has a central red panel, bordered above and below by narrow white stripes and then blue stripes that are arranged straightly and symmetrically.

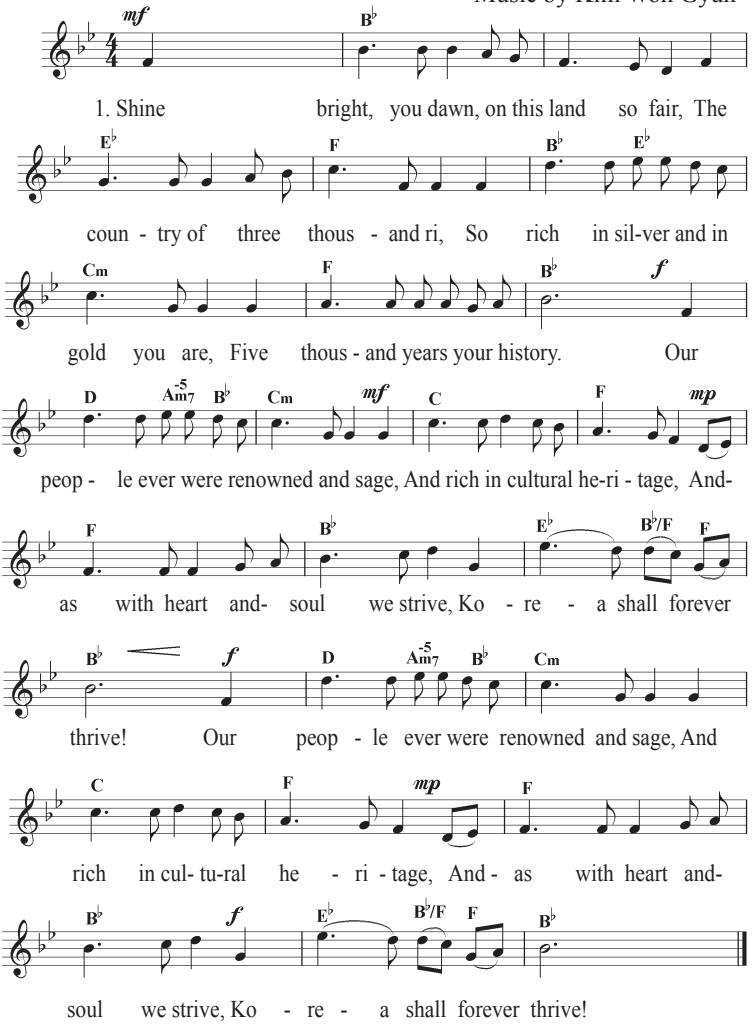
This gives a visual feeling of solemnity.

The white circle with a five-pointed red star placed closer to the hoist gives an impression of the flag fluttering, free from being restrained in the part opposite the hoist.

4. NATIONAL ANTHEM

PATRIOTIC SONG

Slowly and solemnly

Words by Pak Se Yong
Music by Kim Won Gyun

mf
1. Shine bright, you dawn, on this land so fair, The
coun - try of three thous - and ri, So rich in sil-ver and in
gold you are, Five thous - and years your history. Our
mf
mp
peop - le ever were renowned and sage, And rich in cultural he-ri - tage, And-
as with heart and- soul we strive, Ko - re - a shall forever
f
thrive! Our peop - le ever were renowned and sage, And
mp
rich in cul- tu-ral he - ri - tage, And - as with heart and-
f
soul we strive, Ko - re - a shall forever thrive!

1. *Shine bright, you dawn, on this land so fair, The country of three thousand ri,*
   So rich in silver and in gold you are, Five thousand years your history.
   Our people ever were renowned and sage, And rich in cultural heritage,
   And as with heart and soul we strive, Korea shall forever thrive!
   Our people ever were renowned and sage, And rich in cultural heritage,
   And as with heart and soul we strive, Korea shall forever thrive!

2. *And in the spirit of Mount Paektu, With love of toil that shall never die,*
   With will of iron fostered by the truth, We'll lead the whole world by and by.
   We have the might to foil the angry sea, Our land more prosperous still shall be,
   As by the people's will we strive, Korea shall forever thrive!
   We have the might to foil the angry sea, Our land more prosperous still shall be,
   As by the people's will we strive, Korea shall forever thrive!

National anthem is regarded as a banner of a country, together with the national emblem and national flag. Symbolic of the dignity of a country and the spirit and honour of a nation, it reflects the social, class and political ideals and character of the country.

It is regarded as an established practice to hoist national flags and play national anthems when diplomatic functions are held between two countries. When an athlete, who has won at an international game like the Olympics, mounts on the medal-awarding podium, his or her national flag is hoisted amidst the playing of his or her national anthem.

The national anthem of the DPRK is *The Patriotic Song*.

After the liberation of the country, the work of creating the national anthem became a patriotic campaign involving all the Korean people, writers and composers in particular.

As a result, over 300 works were created and submitted for deliberation.

According to deliberation, *The Patriotic Song*, written by poet Pak Se Yong in early May 1947, was chosen as the lyrics for the national anthem. Later, the undertaking of setting the lyrics to music was conducted, with the result that many pieces of music were presented. Finally the piece written by Kim Won Gyun was chosen.

The Patriotic Song is profound in the thematic and ideological contents of the words in conformity with the

qualities of a hymn.

The lyrics reflect in not many lines of verses the beautiful nature, time-honoured history and traditions of Korea and the ennobling feeling of affection of the Korean people for their motherland in depth and breadth.

The first stanza portrays the endless glory and boundless pride of the Korean people who are leading a happy life in the three thousand-*ri* land of golden tapestry which has 5 000-year history and brilliant culture and is abundant in natural resources in a weighty and graceful way through refined poetic words, like *Shine bright, you dawn, on this land so fair, Five thousand years your history* and *And rich in cultural heritage*.

The words *And as with heart and soul we strive, Korea shall forever thrive* strongly appeal to the people to cherish a sense of patriotism so as to add brilliance to the 3 000-*ri* land through generations.

The second stanza of the song strongly depicts a firm conviction that Korea will shine all over the world as a powerful and prosperous, independent and sovereign state as it has the anti-Japanese revolutionary traditions, the might of the unity of the Korean people, their high level of revolutionary spirit and inexhaustible creativity, as well as their unshakable faith and determination to develop their country into a people's country, a powerful country of Juche, down through generations.

5. OFFICIAL LANGUAGE

A language, a major criterion for characterizing a nation, is closely related with the problem of the nation, the state and human life.

The state adopts its official language out of its class character and ideals, and standardizes it so that it is used in a correct and unified way in the formulation and publishing of its policies, decisions and laws and in mass media including newspapers, periodicals, books and broadcasts, as well as in school education, scientific and cultural work and external activities.

Worldwide, states of a homogenous nation like Korea are a few in number, and most of them are multiethnic states that use two or three languages as their official languages.

In a state of a homogenous nation official language and national language are identical in principle but different from each other in many aspects.

National language that was born along with the formation of the nation is a basic form of human language, which shares its destiny with the nation in the whole course of their existence. In contrast to it, official language is the national language, which the state has readjusted and standardized according to its language policy formulated in conformity with the class interests and demands and the change of the times.

There are over 200 countries on the planet now, and there are more than 60 official languages and more than 6 000 national languages, which means that over three states use the same one as their official language.

Koreans are a homogeneous nation.

The standard Korean language is the cultured language of Pyongyang, a dialect which has a developed linguistic system and structure and is beautiful and refined. Its pronunciation is fluent with rising and falling cadences and long and short sounds, and its intonation sounds very pleasing to the ear.

Rich and diversified in its descriptive power, the Korean language is capable of expressing any complex ideas and delicate feelings, and can move people to laughter or to tears.

Its grammatical structure is characterized by a typical agglutinative language. Its grammatical structure and sentence system are expressed by particles. The diversified and rich particles of 400 and over can give an exact description of delicate and closely-knit grammatical meaning.

Written language of the state concerned is involved in the concept of its mother tongue.

The Korean people have distinctive national letters along with excellent spoken language.

According to historical records, in olden times the

Korean people created their letters and used them, but it was *Ridu* left on documents and historical relics that proved the existence of the Korean letters.

Ridu was a unique system of letters created by Koreans for transcribing the pronunciation and meaning of Chinese characters in a Korean way.

However, these characters, used by feudal officials to compile official documents, were not comprehensible to ordinary people, who did not know Chinese characters.

Later, *Hunminjongum*, or Correct Letters for Teaching People, was created.

Hunminjongum, an alphabet unique to the Korean people, is very developed and excellent. It was created by several scholars on the order of Sejong, the fourth monarch of the feudal Joson dynasty.

At the time of its creation in January 1444, it had 17 consonants and 11 vowels–28 letters in all. Today the alphabet has 40 letters and is arranged in its own way.

Korean alphabet

After Korea's liberation two plans were suggested for changing the letter system–one with 40 letters and the other with 24 letters.

Four of the 28 original letters had been out of use because of the self-development of the letter system, a natural phenomenon. Later, a problem was raised whether to involve in the system of Korean letters by regarding as independent letters the supplemented five fortes consonants and 11 diphthongs (16 letters in all) or to remove them from this system by regarding them not as independent letters but as mere diagrammatic derivatives. These plans were based on the arguments on whether to recognize the intrinsic nature and essence of letters as a means of transcribing the vocal sound proceeding from the concept that letters are, in principle, symbols of the transcribed vocal sounds or regard it as mere descriptive symbols. In other words, in case the supplemented 16 letters are recognized as different vocal sounds, they should be contained in the letter system regarding them as independent letters; if they are regarded as mechanical and diagrammatic combination of original letters, it could not be regarded as independent letters nor be contained in the letter system.

The 16 letters must be part of the system of letters for they have distinctive and independent vocal sounds and the Korean letters have clear one-to-one correspondence

between a letter and its vocal sound.

The system of Korean letters, a written form of the Pyongyang dialect, was affirmed to have 40 letters, not 24 letters, because the system is not an ensemble of simple diagrams but a means of transcribing the vocal sounds of the language unique to the Korean nation.

Hunminjongum is a system of alphabetical letters, the most developed form in the history of development of letters.

As the alphabet can transcribe the sounds of consonants and vowels, the smallest unit in the vocal sound of humans, it can transcribe all the vocal sounds of Korean language, as well as most of the spoken language of any other country.

As it was created by imitating the shapes of pronunciation organs of humans, its principle is scientific and systematic, and it is easy to learn and convenient to write.

The DPRK formalized all problems, ranging from fixing the alphabet with 40 letters to rectifying the writing regulations including leaving spaces between words, thus improving and completing the letter system and writing mode in a more scientific way.

6. NATIONAL FLOWER

Magnolia blossom

Every country varies from one another in terms of the year of having nominated its national flower, the criterion of its selection and its species, some nominating one species of flower and others, several species. A certain country has a unified national flower, while its regions have regional flowers peculiar to the regions and its cities have city flowers symbolic of the cities.

Countries have national flowers with the purpose of representing and symbolizing their nations and improving the cultural and sentimental standard of the people by means of these flowers.

It is a practice that countries nominate flowers as their national ones that are liked and loved best by their people.

The criterion of selecting the national flower varies from one country to another.

In selecting the national flower, the first and foremost consideration is the characteristics inherent to that flower such as shape, colour and fragrance regardless of whether it is a flower or a flowering plant.

When the national flower is selected from among flowering plants, most countries select them from annual,

Flower

Leaf

Fruit

Dried fruit

Seed

biennial or perennial ones.

The national flower of the DPRK is the blossom of magnolia (*Magnolia sieboldii*).

The single species of its kind has some characteristics.

It is distributed only in East Asia centring on Korea. It is a member of the ancestral group of seed plants. The ancestral plants of magnolia family originated in the Cretaceous period of the Mesozoic age dating back one hundred million years. Its genus in Korea, originated in the Palaeogene period in the Cenozoic age, survived the Ice Age.

The flower is of great ornamental value, which is estimated according to its shape, size, colour and fragrance. The magnolia blossom is 8-10cm in diameter and has six petals on average and three sepals. The large, broad and white petals form a good harmony and give a graceful and fresh feeling. The dark red stamens and yellowish pistil in the centre of the flower form a formative harmony, and emit deep fragrance. The large and thick leaves look fresh and weighty, and the grayish white trunk carries mightiness.

The dark pink fruits are good-shaped. The shape, size

and colour of the flower are the same anywhere the tree is planted. The lifespan of each stem is about 30 years, and the newly-developed stems continue to grow.

A flower is in full bloom for about one week, and one can see the flowers on a tree for 50-60 days.

The tree can be propagated through seeds, grafting and branches.

7. NATIONAL TREE

Many countries officially designated their national trees, and most of them selected theirs in consideration of their national traditions.

National trees have a positive impact on instilling in people's mind pride and dignity of their country and nation and on conserving biodiversity.

For a tree to represent the spirit of a nation, it must provide an overall reflection of the nation's soul, traditions and history and its people's sentiments and feelings.

The national tree of the DPRK is pine (*Pinus densiflora*).

The evergreen needle-leaved tree is, in general, crooked, but those in mountains are relatively straight.

The Korean people regard pine tree as the symbol of their national spirit because, in particular, it is an evergreen and viable plant.

All the living organisms on earth regulate their life in the severe winter, but pine tree remains unchanged, braving snowstorm and finally greeting the coming spring. The Korean nation have ascribed their will and mettle to the resolute and steadfast appearance of the tree. They have also regarded the tree as one of the ten

Pine tree

symbols of longevity.

The tree has long been the subject of many pictures and poems, and clothes and handicraft works have been decorated with its patterns.

Solgo, a celebrated artist in the period of Three Kingdoms (8th century), painted an old pine tree on a wall of the Hwangryong Temple so realistically that birds, mistaking it for real one, tried to perch there, only to fall down.

Many literary works described it as a symbolic tree braving blizzards and frost.

Samyongdang, a famous volunteers commander during the Imjin Patriotic War, wrote in his poem, titled, *Chongsong* (Green Pine): Evergreen the pine is, to be called king of plants; …. Unchanged both in sadness and happiness, constant its green colour is.

Other people also praised highly of the tree, saying, "Fidelity of the pine is proved after the blizzard blasted." and "Never change will be our mind like the green pine."

The tree has great economic value: the trunk, root, needles, pollen and cones can all be put into use; a nutritious mushroom grows from a root alive and poria, from a dead one.

The timber has been used as a building material, knots extracted from the nodes and root as fuel for lighting, and oil extracted from them in killing insects.

Resin has strong sterilizing effect; it has been used as a medicinal material and antiseptic. Fossilized resin from the root is called amber, and it has been used in making various kinds of luxury goods, ornaments and craftworks.

Needles were steeped into hot water to be drunk as a tea, and their powder was used as animal feed.

The pollen with various amino acids, enzymes, vitamins

and minerals has been used as a tonic.

Songi mushroom can be found in pine groves with more than 40-year-old trees. This mushroom is regarded as the best of edible mushrooms.

Mt Chilbo, Mt Kumgang and Yangdok, where the mushroom is a specialty, are granite regions with pine groves.

Poria which thrives on the long-dead roots of a pine tree, has been used as tonic.

8. NATIONAL BIRD

Goshawk

The bird representing a nation is designated from among those which have been very familiar to the people of the relevant country for a long period and carry their wisdom, spirit and feeling, or those specific to the country. Usually reflected in the bird are the natural features and culture of the country and the customs of its people.

No criterion is available for the designation worldwide, but each country has its own criteria.

The typical ones are:

-bird that gives friendly feelings and sings with beautiful voice

-bird unique to the country and specific in its kind

-bird of beautiful yet rare shape

-bird of historical meaning of the country or nation through legendary tales or customs

-bird protected and propagated in its number

-bird symbolic of the sovereign power of the state or the spirit of the nation

-bird targeted for scientific research

-bird with undaunted temperament

The national bird of the DPRK is goshawk (*Accipiter gentilis*).

Belonging to the genus *Accipiter*, the forest-dwelling bird of prey has long and broad wings and a long tail with a round end.

It takes smaller birds as game in the central part or edges of dense forests and in bushes.

Goshawk has been familiar to and beloved by the Korean people from olden times and was tamed to hunt wild animals like pheasant.

Goshawk breeding had been popular from the period of Ancient Joson and hunting with the bird was brisk.

In the early period of Ancient Joson, the post responsible for the enforcement of law and order was called Ungga, named after *ung* (hawk in Korean). The post was named so because the ancient Koreans had acquired a wide knowledge of the physiological features of hawk while taming the bird and found similarity between the post and the bird of prey.

During the Koguryo period, goshawk was widely bred for hunting.

As for the legend about Tongmyong, the founder king of Koguryo, establishing the state, *Chronicles of King Sejong* reads in part:

Haemosu, King Tongmyong's father, had a skills duel with Habaek, god of river. When Habaek transformed himself into a pheasant, Haemosu, transformed into a hawk, brought the pheasant into submission.

Tomb murals from the Koguryo period have similarity in portraying hunting with goshawk. In those days a hunter rode a horse and let a hawk catch an animal or flew

Male goshawk

Female goshawk

Goshawk looking after its eggs

Just hatched goshawks

several hawks when he was hunting on foot.

This tradition was succeeded by the people of Koryo.

Chronicles of Koryo reads in part: King Kyonghyo called royal subjects at two ministries, and asked, "I've heard that all of you are breeding hawks and dogs. Is it true?" The fact that many ministers and royal subjects in those days liked hawks was also recorded in the book. This meant that the bird was associated with the life of the people of Koryo like the days of Koguryo and Palhae.

History records that during the last days of Koryo, Ungbang was established as a special organ for providing goshawks to the king and civil servants and for trade with neighbouring countries.

Hawk was an important source of foreign trade for Koryo.

In 945 Koryo sold to Jin China 20 gilt bells for hawks, 20 silver-and-copper-gilded bells for goshawks and other goods; in 995 it sent hawks along with other specialities to Khitan for trade.

The country conducted transactions with not only Khitan but also other countries including Mongolia which expanded its territory to the border of Koryo. Here, hawk was an important item for trade.

The tradition of breeding goshawk and hunting with it was succeeded and became more popular in the days of

the feudal Joson dynasty founded after Koryo.

Ungbang survived the upheaval of the change of dynasties.

Its staff consisted of ungsa and ungin. Ungsa, with expert knowledge for taming hawk and giving it medical treatment, was free from all kinds of corvee and the post was hereditary. *Chronicles of King Thaejong* mentions this fact, and *Chronicles of King Sejong* reads that the king issued an order in March 1423 to the governors of Phyongan, Hamgyong and Hwanghae provinces to let ungsa under their control catch hawks.

Those breeding hawks in Ungbang were called ungin. They also enjoyed exemption from all manner of corvee, and followed the king when he went hunting.

Many of them lived in Hamgyong, Phyongan and Hwanghae provinces.

Typical game birds in those days were pheasant, wild goose, wild duck, quail and crane. Pheasants were seen everywhere in the country, and when it was time to do sowing or harvesting, they flew over the crop fields in flocks.

These were good game birds for those who hunted with hawks. According to a survey conducted in those days, almost all Koreans, who were not so poor, had a hawk in their houses and hawk killing was blamed as a dishonourable act.

Painting portraying a goshawk

Good-luck charm portraying goshawk

Hawks were caught by similar methods throughout the history.

In the course of using hawks in their living by taming them, people's knowledge of the bird of prey was enriched, and it became the subject of painting.

A painting of a hawk was a typical example. This good-luck charm was one of the traditional pictures which used to be plastered on walls of the house on New Year's Day. The painting, together with that of a tiger, represented people's simple desire to live peacefully, happily and harmoniously in their beautiful country.

9. NATIONAL DOG

Phungsan

Every country has its symbolic animal, representing the history, temperament and abilities of the nation.

Dogs can also be counted as one of them.

Of the wild animals, dogs were the first to be domesticated by humans in the Palaeolithic age, the age of their evolution. Since then the dogs have been with people in their living. This clever animal has been designated as symbols by many countries.

Possessed of superior sense organs like keen nose and ears, it can run fast, has sharp teeth, and is kind to its master and brave.

The scope of its utility is increasing–hunting, guarding, fighting, pursuing, investigation, racing, search, test, companionship and various service activities. Some dogs are used as beasts of burden.

With the rapid development of modern civilization, this useful animal can be seen in many spheres of human life, and its worth is growing as the days go by.

Many countries have designated as their national dogs those that have been acclimatized to their climatic and soil conditions over a long historical period and contributed

greatly to the people's life, and make efforts to preserve their thoroughbreds.

Phungsan is the national dog of the DPRK.

It is a native dog of Korea, which has long been familiar with the Korean people.

As it originated in the area of Kim Hyong Gwon County (the then Phungsan County), it is named Phungsan.

The dog had its name known to the world since 1910s. In the days of national ruin, many people, in order to resist the occupation of their country by Japan, took up arms. The Righteous Volunteers units stationed in the Phungsan area used the dog for fighting, guarding and hunting.

Phungsan was inscribed on the list of national living monuments in April 1956.

It is a typical hunting dog acclimatized to the northern mountainous regions and forests in Korea.

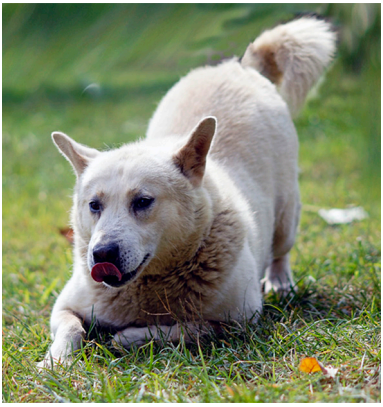
Generally brave and tenacious, the dog is higher in hunting abilities than other dogs.

It also has other abilities like sensing and memorizing.

In the course of being trained it learns the human words and gestures to some extent. In particular, it understands the words and gestures of its master and is responsive to the

Phungsan (male)

Phungsan (female)



master's demands.

This animal is clever enough to return home from tens or hundreds of kilometres away, all alone. The cleverness is revealed more vividly in the course of living with humans.

Phungsan is physically conditioned for hunting. Looking like an overturned gourd, the head is big and round which means the ratio between the brain capacity and body weight is bigger than that of other species. That is the reason why the dog is clever, according to dog experts.

The short and thick neck reduces the moment of inertia while running, making the dog easier and quicker to change the direction.

The back is straight, horizontal to the ground, or the back part is a bit higher than the front part, and the hind legs are straight. So it can easily chase an animal even in mountainous areas.

The mouth is short, so the biting is strong.

Weighing 20-30kg, the dog is suitable for hunting all

animals, big and small.

For the wild temperament it acquired while chasing animals in mountainous areas, the dog has liberal tendency, so when young, it should be trained systematically according to the general training principles and through practice.

Normally these dogs seem to be behaving on their own, but when hunting, they move in an orderly way while cooperating with one another.

The dog displays its abilities and temperament particularly in hunting.

Moving in a group of two or three or more, they climb up and down mountains in search of a trace of a game animal. When a game animal, be it a boar and bear, is

found, they charge to it, the “leader” leading the pack. If the game is a large animal, they bark at it, moving around it and seeing its response. They bite its tail or a hind leg, making it disconcerted. Not feeling afraid of its growling, they keep their posture and countenance. In the course of fighting, they may get wounded, but, not flinching, they keep on attacking. As soon as the “leader” bites the vital point, the other dogs pounce upon the animal, biting other points. On seeing the blood, they grow wilder, and at last bring it down to the ground.

When confronted with a big animal, it sometimes moves between the animal’s legs or under its belly before biting the throat. At the time of close fight it also uses the forefeet, and accurately at that.

10. NATIONAL LIQUOR

National liquor represents the physiographical conditions, customs and distilling history of a nation.

Many kinds of liquor have been made from olden times but their taste varies depending on the raw materials, additives, methods of distilling and quality of water. In the course of this, liquor representative of a region or nation has been selected.

Koreans also have their history and culture related with liquor.

In the Old Stone Age, their ancestors discovered liquor, fruit wine fermented naturally.

The New Stone Age witnessed people making liquor with wild fruits and cereals.

In the period of the Three Kingdoms their liquor was renowned in the neighbouring countries, and the distilling techniques were introduced into them.

Inbon from Paekje, one of the three kingdoms founded by the Korean nation, went to Japan between the late 3rd century and early 4th century, and propagated the distilling techniques. He is still worshipped as the "god" of liquor by the Japanese people.

Many kinds of liquor appeared and distilling techniques developed rapidly in the period of Koryo.

The main ingredients of the liquor were rice and malt. In particular, thanks to the achievements in the field of

traditional medicine, medicinal liquor distilling method was developed. Medicinal materials including insam, pine nut and *Cortex Acanthopanacis* were used to add pharmacological effect to liquor.

In the period of the feudal Joson dynasty, the distilling techniques, traditional and new, were integrated and systematized; traditional methods of processing raw materials, fermenting and storing were systematized, and various distilling methods developed.

The national liquor of the DPRK is Pyongyang Soju with an alcohol content of 25%, which is loved by Koreans and is most popular among them.

Its major raw materials are corn and rice.

The label of Pyongyang Soju is designed with white and gray colours which go well with the transparent bottle and with the Taedong Gate, symbolic of old Pyongyang, at the background; portrayed at the right corner in the lower part is a scene of brewing by the Korean ancestors, with a red stamp, reading *Joson Myongju* (Renowned Liquor of Korea–Tr), sealed on it.

Pyongyang Soju won the February 16 Sci-Tech Prize, top sci-tech prize in the country, and the December 15 Medal of Quality, a medal conferred on domestic products of the highest quality.

The liquor tastes pure, mild yet savoury and refreshing.

NATIONAL SYMBOLS OF THE DPRK

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